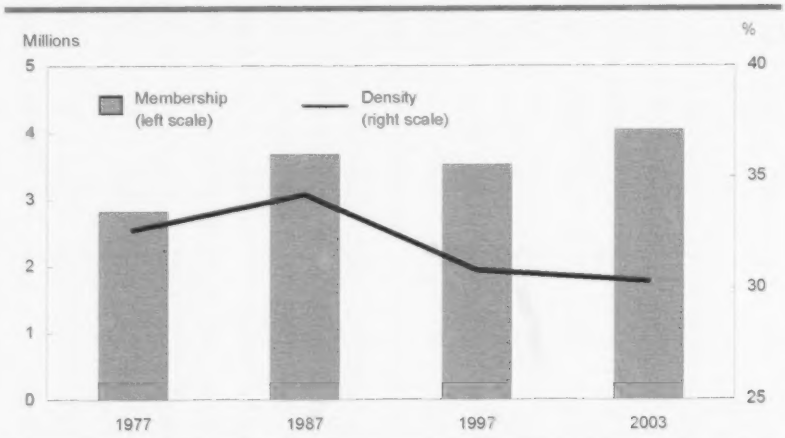
The union movement in transition

Ernest B. Akyeampong

Membership in a union offers several advantages. Not only do unionized workers generally receive higher wages (Fang and Verma 2002), they are also more likely to enjoy non-wage benefits such as coverage in employer-sponsored pension, dental or medical plans (Akyeampong 2002). In addition, their greater accessibility to a grievance or dispute settlement system is thought to provide greater protection against exploitation, abuse or unfair treatment by their employer (Akyeampong 2003).

In light of these advantages, the continuous increase in union membership over the past decades is not surprising: the union ranks rose from 2.8 million in 1977 to just over 4 million in 2003 (Chart A). However, as in many other Western industrialized countries, growth has not kept pace with employment increases.[1] As a result, the unionization rate (or density)—the proportion of employees belonging to a union—has fallen over the years. After rising slightly from 32.6% in 1977 to 34.2% in 1987, it drifted downwards, oscillating between 30% and 31% over most of the past decade (Chart A).[2]

Chart A: Union membership rose 43% between 1977 and 2003, but density changed little.



Sources: CALURA, 1977-1987; Labour Force Survey, 1997-2003

Although the unionization rate did not change much, the same cannot be said for the membership mix by sex, industry, job status, and so forth. Several, often interrelated factors account for the changing profile of union membership—notably, employee demographics; labour laws and regulations, especially provincial; industry shifts, especially from goods to services; the occupation mix of the workforce; and the effectiveness of union recruitment and retention.

Using various sources, this article first looks at how union membership has evolved over the past several decades, including some of the factors behind the changes (see *Data sources*). Then, using data from the post-1996 Labour Force Survey, it details where the union movement has gained or lost membership and density in recent years.

Long-term trends

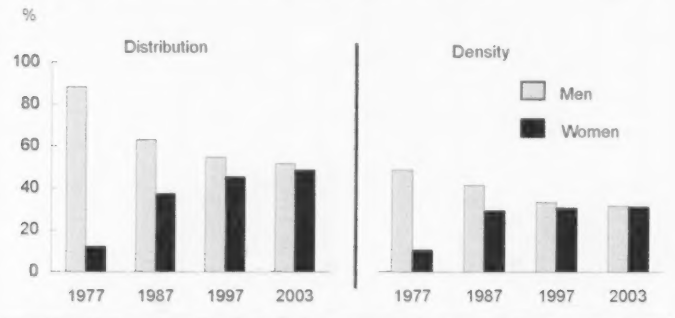
Constructing a historical profile of union membership in Canada is not easy, partly because no consistent and all-encompassing series exist. Aggregate union membership estimates date from 1911; some

Ernest B. Akyeampong is with the Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division. He can be reached at (613) 951-4624 or perspectives@statcan.ca.

indicators are available from the 1960s and 1970s (membership by sex and regional dispersion), but others start in the 1980s or later (age, industry, occupation, public[3] versus private sector, and full- versus part-time work.)

Undoubtedly, the biggest and most profound transformation in union membership lies in the mix of men and women. From a mere 12% in 1977, the share of women has risen steadily to nearly half (48%) in 2003 (Chart B). This extraordinarily strong and growing presence is accounted for by several, often interrelated factors. These include the growing proportion of women in the paid workforce; their increased presence in the heavily unionized public sector; their movement into traditionally male-dominated and often heavily unionized industries or occupations such as construction; the rising unionization among part-time and non-permanent workers; and the expansion of union activity into traditionally female-dominated and hitherto non- or less-unionized workplaces, especially in the service sector (Akyeampong 1998).

Chart B: Women's union density and membership share matched men's by 2003.



Sources: CALURA, 1977-1987; Labour Force Survey, 1997-2003

The growing number of women in the union movement is reflected in changing density rates by sex. For women, the rate rose steadily, from 10% in 1977 to 30% in 2003. For men, the reverse occurred. Partly in line with the changing structure of the Canadian economy and labour force, the men's rate fell steadily, from 47% in 1977 to 31% in 2003. In summary, while women's unionization rate was less than one-quarter of men's in 1977, the two were virtually identical by 2003.

Another notable transformation has been the declining share of membership in the goods sector and an increase in the service sector. This can be attributed primarily to a shift in the economic structure, resulting in employment drops in the once heavily unionized, male dominated, goods-producing industries, especially manufacturing, in favour of the service industries. In 1987, the goods sector accounted for roughly one-third of total union membership, compared with only one-quarter in 2003 (Chart C). In terms of union density, the gap between the goods sector and the service sector in 1987 (40% versus 31%) had almost disappeared by 2003 (31% versus 30%).

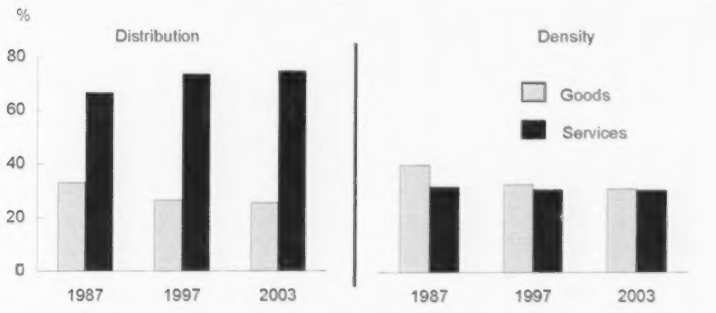
Regionally, union membership share did not change much over the past several decades, remaining roughly in line with regional shares of national employee counts (Table 1). However, estimated union membership can sometimes present a false portrait of union strength in an area. The density rate is a better measure for comparison. Quebec recorded the highest rate throughout the period (38% in 2003). Other regions mostly registered declines, the steepest being in British Columbia. Ontario's 27% was the lowest rate in 2003.

Table 1: Union membership, distribution and density by region

	Total	Atl.	Que.	Ont.	Prairies	B.C.
Distribution	'000			%		
1977	2,817	7.7	27.6	37.5	13.3	13.8
1987	3,662	7.6	28.2	37.2	14.4	12.5
1997	3,516	6.9	28.4	35.1	15.0	14.6
2003	4,036	6.8	29.4	35.4	15.3	13.2
Density				%		
1977	32.6	34.1	34.7	31.0	26.8	40.9
1987	34.2	36.9	39.6	31.0	30.1	38.6
1997	30.8	30.3	36.9	27.7	27.1	34.0
2003	30.3	29.3	37.6	26.8	27.1	32.4

Sources: CALURA, 1977-1987; Labour Force Survey, 1997-2003

Chart C: Union membership declined in the goods sector but rose in services.



Sources: CALURA, 1987; Labour Force Survey, 1997-2003

Also noteworthy have been changes in representation among full- and part-time workers, and in the public and the private sectors. Part-time workers saw both a share increase (from 8% to 14%) and a rise in density (from 18% to 23%) between 1984 and 2003 (Table 2). The increases were widespread. The reverse was true for full-time workers, who saw their share decline (92% to 86%) as well as their density (39% to 32%).

During the 1960s, the rapid expansion of government and the extension of bargaining rights to most of its employees saw the public sector take a more prominent position in the union movement (Eaton 1976; Galarneau 1996). Since then, the influence of this group has continued to grow, its representation rising from 42% in 1984 to 53% in 2003. In terms of density, the rate among public-sector workers (just over 70%) changed little, while falling from 26% to 18% among private-sector workers. Indeed, stability in the public sector prevented overall union density in Canada from falling below 30%.[4]

Table 2: Union membership, distribution and density by sector and work status

	Total	Public	Private	Full-time	Part-time
Distribution	'000			%	
1984	3,474	42.2	57.8	91.7	8.3
1997	3,516	52.6	47.4	87.1	12.9
2003	4,036	53.5	46.5	85.9	14.1
Density			%		
1984	35.5	71.8	25.9	38.7	18.5
1997	30.8	69.7	19.0	32.9	21.4
2003	30.3	72.0	18.2	31.8	23.3

Sources: Survey of Union Membership, 1984; Labour Force Survey, 1997-2003

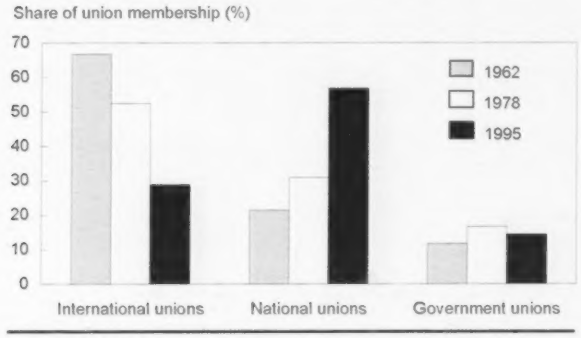
Another profound change over the past several decades has been the waning influence of international unions (those with headquarters outside Canada). An important objective of the Corporations and Labour Unions Returns Act (CALURA) was to monitor the extent and effect of international unions on organized labour in Canada. The available CALURA data show a dramatic and steady shift away from international to national unions between 1962 and 1995 (1995 being the last collection year under CALURA) (Mainville and Olinek 1999). In 1962, international unions accounted for about two-thirds of union membership in Canada; by 1995, this had fallen to 29% (Chart D). In contrast, national union representation rose from 21% to 57%. The decline of international unions resulted mainly from defections to competing national unions and breakaways to form new antonomous national unions—the breakaway of the 136,000-strong Auto Workers Union Canadian membership in 1986 being notable (Statistics Canada 1994).

Throughout the period under review, the share of government unions (consisting of federal and provincial government employees) stayed in the 12% to 17% range.[5] After 1995, the international union share declined slightly to a little over 27% in 2003 (HRDC 2003).[6]

Recent gains and losses

For simplicity, only 1997 and 2003 (the first and latest years) of the revised Labour Force Survey series are shown, but the directions (or algebraic signs) of changes between these two years are reasonably representative of recent trends (not shown) in union strength by different worker groups.

Chart D: International unions have lost significant ground.



Source: CALURA

Changes in union density form the basis for comparing the trends of different worker groups. A positive change signifies a gain in union presence, and vice versa. To facilitate comparison, data are presented in descending order of change between 1997 and 2003.

Demographic

Overall, union density decreased by 0.5 percentage points between 1997 and 2003 (Table 3)—not because of a loss in membership, but because employment growth (16.7%) surpassed the gain in union membership (14.8%). Continuing the trend established over the past several decades, the rate rose by 0.7 points among women employees, but fell by 1.6 points among men. The largest increase occurred among youth (15 to 24, up 2.7 points). Workers in all other age groups (except 55 and over) saw some losses, with the largest decline among those 45 to 54 (-2.8 points).

Although the workforce has become more educated, only those with some postsecondary education recorded a slight growth in unionization. All other groups, including workers holding university degrees, recorded declines. The large fall in the rate among those with less than grade 9 education coincides with a large decline in union membership among some blue-collar workers.

Industry

Losses of union strength in the goods-producing industries in recent years were not offset by gains in the service-producing industries—both sectors lost

Table 3: Union membership and density by age, sex and education (by descending order of density change)

	Employees		Union members		Union density		Change 1997-2003		
	1997	2003	1997	2003	1997	2003	Employees	Members	**Density**
	'000		'000		%		%	%	% point
Total	**11,421**	**13,333**	**3,516**	**4,036**	**30.8**	**30.3**	**16.7**	**14.8**	**-0.5**
Sex									
Women	5,437	6,513	1,593	1,954	29.3	30.0	19.8	22.7	**0.7**
Men	5,984	6,820	1,923	2,082	32.1	30.5	14.0	8.3	**-1.6**
Age									
15 to 24	1,891	2,298	204	310	10.8	13.5	21.5	52.0	**2.7**
55 and over	898	1,382	316	501	35.2	36.3	53.9	58.5	**1.1**
25 to 44	6,322	6,636	1,990	1,994	31.5	30.1	5.0	0.2	**-1.4**
45 to 54	2,309	3,017	1,006	1,231	43.6	40.8	30.7	22.4	**-2.8**
Education									
Some postsecondary	1,158	1,373	262	317	22.6	23.1	18.6	21.0	**0.5**
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	3,775	4,548	1,294	1,540	34.3	33.9	20.5	19.0	**-0.4**
High school graduate	2,390	2,746	677	757	28.3	27.6	14.9	11.8	**-0.7**
University degree	2,071	2,715	744	944	35.9	34.8	31.1	26.9	**-1.1**
Some high school	1,564	1,561	389	364	24.9	23.3	-0.2	-6.4	**-1.6**
Less than grade 9	463	391	150	115	32.4	29.4	-15.6	-23.3	**-3.0**

Source: Labour Force Survey

ground between 1997 and 2003. While the service-sector loss was slight (-0.2 points), the goods sector was down a sizeable 1.6 points.

Workers in the fast-growing information technology industries appear less attracted to the union movement. Many do not feel they fit into the typical 9 to 5 mould (Galarneau 1994). They often work atypical hours, have several workplaces (including home), and own stock in their company (Luffman 2003).

Union density increased in the already heavily unionized public sector (2.3 points), but fell slightly in the private sector.

At a more detailed industry level, the biggest gains occurred in public administration, particularly among workers in local government (5.5 percentage points)—the result of employment falling more than union membership. Federal government workers also saw a large gain (3.2 points), while the rate among their provincial counterparts remained almost unchanged (Table 4). Construction was the other major industry to register a significant increase (2.8 points).

Union density losses of more than 2 percentage points were registered for workers in non-durable and durable manufacturing; information, culture and recreation; and natural resource industries.

Table 4: Union membership and density by industry (by descending order of density change)

	Employees		Union members		Union density		Change 1997-2003		
	1997	2003	1997	2003	1997	2003	Employees	Members	Density
Industry	'000		'000		%		%	%	% point
Service-producing	8,540	9,994	2,584	3,007	30.3	30.1	17.0	16.4	**-0.2**
Goods-producing	2,881	3,339	933	1,029	32.4	30.8	15.9	10.3	**-1.6**
Major industry groups									
Local administration	298	254	177	165	59.4	64.9	-14.8	-6.8	**5.5**
Federal administration	269	320	178	221	66.0	69.2	19.0	24.2	**3.2**
Construction	483	644	144	210	29.9	32.7	33.3	45.8	**2.8**
Finance and insurance	575	602	46	54	8.1	9.0	4.7	17.4	**0.9**
Educational services	876	1,001	598	691	68.2	69.0	14.3	15.6	**0.8**
Health care and social assistance	1,186	1,482	623	792	52.6	53.4	25.0	27.1	**0.8**
Retail trade	1,420	1,677	192	238	13.6	14.2	18.1	24.0	**0.6**
Professional, scientific and technical	489	653	20	29	4.1	4.5	33.5	45.0	**0.4**
Utilities	116	131	78	89	67.4	67.7	12.9	14.1	**0.3**
Provincial administration	226	241	160	171	70.7	71.0	6.6	6.9	**0.3**
Agriculture	121	120	4	4	3.3	3.5	-0.8	0.0	**0.2**
Other services	464	482	42	44	9.0	9.2	3.9	4.8	**0.2**
Real estate and leasing	162	186	12	14	7.6	7.6	14.8	16.7	**0.0**
Business, building and other support services	332	469	43	60	12.9	12.9	41.3	39.5	**0.0**
Accommodation and food services	783	922	62	68	7.9	7.4	17.8	9.7	**-0.5**
Wholesale trade	372	482	39	45	10.4	9.4	29.6	15.4	**-1.0**
Transportation and warehousing	578	629	248	262	43.0	41.7	8.8	5.6	**-1.3**
Non-durable manufacturing	822	913	273	282	33.2	30.9	11.1	3.3	**-2.3**
Information, culture and recreation	510	596	144	151	28.1	25.4	16.9	4.9	**-2.7**
Natural resources	245	239	69	60	28.2	24.9	-2.4	-13.0	**-3.3**
Durable manufacturing	1,094	1,291	364	384	33.3	29.8	18.0	5.5	**-3.5**
Sector									
Public	2,654	2,998	1,850	2,159	69.7	72.0	13.0	16.7	**2.3**
Private	8,766	10,335	1,667	1,877	19.0	18.2	17.9	12.6	**-0.8**

Source: Labour Force Survey

Occupation

In terms of occupation, by far the largest inroads occurred among workers in the strongly growing childcare and home support field (7.2 percentage points), followed by those in other already heavily unionized health occupations, such as health support staff (3.3 points), nursing (2.9 points), and professional health workers (2.1 points) (Table 5). Significant gains were also made in the recruitment of workers in construction trades (2.9 points), and in culture and recreation (2.2 points). The largest losses were recorded among technical health workers—mostly health, medical, dental, and veterinary technologists and therapists (-4.1 points)—and among those in other trades (-3.1 points). Other occupations registering more than a 2-point decline were clerical, management, and natural and applied sciences, the last having a sizeable concentration of information-technology workers.

Job status and workplace size

In a drive for greater revenue and influence, union leaders have succeeded in making significant gains in recent years in many hitherto less-unionized workplaces and work groups. For example, density rose among part-time workers (1.9 points), non-permanent employees (2.4 points), and persons with short job tenure (less than five years) (Table 6). These increases prevailed by sex, age, industry and occupation. The rate fell among full-time workers, persons in permanent jobs, and those with tenure longer than five years.

Table 5: Union membership and density by occupation (by descending order of density change)

	Employees		Union members		Union density		Change 1997-2003		
	1997	2003	1997	2003	1997	2003	Employees	Members	**Density**
	'000		'000		%		%	%	% point
Occupation									
Childcare and home support	200	250	63	96	31.4	38.6	25.0	52.4	**7.2**
Support staff (health)	162	248	82	134	50.8	54.1	53.1	63.4	**3.3**
Nursing	222	257	173	208	78.1	81.0	15.8	20.2	**2.9**
Construction trades	191	243	72	99	37.7	40.6	27.2	37.5	**2.9**
Culture and recreation	228	295	56	79	24.5	26.7	29.4	41.1	**2.2**
Health professionals	77	86	31	36	39.9	42.0	11.7	16.1	**2.1**
Legal, social and religious	321	413	124	165	38.6	40.0	28.7	33.1	**1.4**
Secondary/elementary teachers	361	408	316	361	87.4	88.6	13.0	14.2	**1.2**
Retail	790	1,000	94	128	12.0	12.8	26.6	36.2	**0.8**
Travel and accommodation	1,052	1,220	274	327	26.1	26.8	16.0	19.3	**0.7**
Protective services	193	224	102	119	52.8	53.2	16.1	16.7	**0.4**
Wholesale	226	356	14	21	6.1	5.8	57.5	50.0	**-0.3**
Contractors and supervisors	86	107	27	33	31.4	31.0	24.4	22.2	**-0.4**
Teachers and professors	514	600	388	450	75.4	75.0	16.7	16.0	**-0.4**
Helpers and labourers	297	312	103	107	34.7	34.2	5.1	3.9	**-0.5**
Financial and administrative	741	704	166	154	22.4	21.8	-5.0	-7.2	**-0.6**
Unique to primary industry	248	266	42	43	16.9	16.1	7.3	2.4	**-0.8**
Other teachers	153	192	72	89	47.0	46.1	25.5	23.6	**-0.9**
Transport equipment operators	443	492	168	181	37.8	36.9	11.1	7.7	**-0.9**
Food and beverage	412	522	41	46	9.9	8.9	26.7	12.2	**-1.0**
Professional	283	325	51	55	18.0	16.9	14.8	7.8	**-1.1**
Labourers	227	204	90	78	39.5	38.3	-10.1	-13.3	**-1.2**
Machine operators and assemblers	809	1,006	318	382	39.3	38.0	24.4	20.1	**-1.3**
Natural and applied sciences	670	898	180	223	26.9	24.8	34.0	23.9	**-2.1**
Management	966	891	109	81	11.3	9.1	-7.8	-25.7	**-2.2**
Clerical	1,229	1,542	363	416	29.5	27.0	25.5	14.6	**-2.5**
Other trades	658	696	278	273	42.3	39.2	5.8	-1.8	**-3.1**
Technical (health)	176	178	109	102	61.6	57.5	1.1	-6.4	**-4.1**

Source: Labour Force Survey

Table 6: Union membership and density by job status and workplace size
(by descending order of density change)

	Employees		Union members		Union density		Change 1997-2003		
	1997	2003	1997	2003	1997	2003	Employees	Members	**Density**
	'000		'000		%		%	%	% point
Work status									
Part-time	2,117	2,440	453	569	21.4	23.3	15.3	25.6	**1.9**
Full-time	9,304	10,894	3,063	3,468	32.9	31.8	17.1	13.2	**-1.1**
Job status									
Non-permanent	1,296	1,660	294	417	22.7	25.1	28.1	41.8	**2.4**
Permanent	10,124	11,673	3,222	3,619	31.8	31.0	15.3	12.3	**-0.8**
Job tenure									
1 to 5 years	3,287	4,473	650	1,033	19.8	23.1	36.1	58.9	**3.3**
1 to 12 months	2,661	2,973	342	437	12.9	14.7	11.7	27.8	**1.8**
9 to 14 years	1,325	1,393	556	560	41.9	40.2	5.1	0.7	**-1.7**
Over 14 years	2,279	2,698	1,302	1,454	57.1	53.9	18.4	11.7	**-3.2**
5 to 9 years	1,870	1,796	667	552	35.7	30.8	-4.0	-17.2	**-4.9**
Workplace size									
Under 20 employees	3,992	4,454	473	563	11.9	12.6	11.6	19.0	**0.7**
20 to 99 employees	3,635	4,340	1,118	1,341	30.8	30.9	19.4	19.9	**0.1**
100 to 500 employees	2,377	2,866	1,104	1,228	46.4	42.9	20.6	11.2	**-3.5**
Over 500 employees	1,416	1,673	821	904	58.0	54.1	18.1	10.1	**-3.9**

Source: Labour Force Survey

Table 7: Union membership and density by province (by descending order of density change)

	Employees		Union members		Union density		Change 1997-2003		
	1997	2003	1997	2003	1997	2003	Employees	Members	**Density**
	'000		'000		%		%	%	% point
Prince Edward Island	49	58	13	16	26.9	28.3	18.4	23.1	**1.4**
Saskatchewan	353	386	116	133	33.0	34.3	9.3	14.7	**1.3**
Quebec	2,709	3,165	1,000	1,188	36.9	37.6	16.8	18.8	**0.7**
Alberta	1,154	1,414	258	317	22.4	22.4	22.5	22.9	**0.0**
Manitoba	431	478	151	167	35.1	34.9	10.9	10.6	**-0.2**
Ontario	4,465	5,319	1,235	1,427	27.7	26.8	19.1	15.5	**-0.9**
Newfoundland and Labrador	164	190	64	73	39.1	38.2	15.9	14.1	**-0.9**
Nova Scotia	324	379	92	104	28.4	27.4	17.0	13.0	**-1.0**
New Brunswick	265	303	74	80	27.9	26.4	14.3	8.1	**-1.5**
British Columbia	1,508	1,640	513	532	34.0	32.4	8.8	3.7	**-1.6**

Source: Labour Force Survey

Data sources

For over three decades (1962-1995), the *Corporations and Labour Unions Returns Act* (CALURA) was the only continuous source of union membership data by sex, industry and province. The Act required each national and international union with 100 or more members resident in Canada to submit annual financial and membership information to the federal government. Statistics Canada was charged with administering the Act. The Act was amended in 1995, removing the reporting requirement for unions. The final published CALURA data therefore relate to 1995 (Mainville and Olinek 1999).

In January 1997, the redesigned Labour Force Survey (LFS) began to collect and publish monthly, dimensionally enriched, membership and coverage estimates—by sex, age, province, industry, occupation, firm size, education, wage rate, etc. (Coverage includes the roughly 2% of employees who are not union members but whose terms of employment are covered by collective agreements.) A comparison of CALURA and LFS estimates (and other household surveys) suggests that overall density rates are marginally higher under CALURA, but that the trends are fairly similar (Galarneau 2003).

Differences emerge for a number of reasons:

- For CALURA, the reference period was December 31 of each year; the LFS annual estimates are the weighted averages of the weekly data collected around the middle of each month.
- CALURA was a census of unions with 100 or more members; the LFS is based on a sample of households and imposes no restrictions on union size.
- Multiple jobholders could belong to different unions in each job and be counted twice in CALURA; in the LFS they are counted only once, and if the main job is not unionized, they are not counted at all.
- Some retirees and pensioners were included in CALURA; they are excluded in the LFS.

The 1984 estimates for public- and private-sector, full- and part-time workers (CALURA did not collect these details) come from the Survey of Union Membership, an LFS-supplement conducted in co-operation with Labour Canada in October 1984. As such, they have some seasonality drawbacks.

Other Statistics Canada Surveys collecting unionization data include the Labour Market Activity Survey (LMAS, 1984-1990), the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID, started in 1993), and the Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA, 1991 and 1995). Both LMAS and SLID data suffer from small sample size and age cutoffs that differ from CALURA and the LFS. The SWA data also have some seasonality drawbacks. However, the questions identifying union membership and coverage in each survey are similar.

In the post-1996 LFS, two questions are used to identify union membership and coverage:

- Is the person a union member?
- Is the person covered by a union contract or collective agreement?

Similarly, recruiting efforts aimed at hitherto less-unionized smaller workplaces appeared to yield positive results. Between 1997 and 2003, union density rose in workplaces with less than 100 employees, and fell heavily in larger ones.

Province

Only three provinces—Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Quebec—saw unions succeed in raising their presence (Table 7). Except for Alberta where the rate remained unchanged, all provinces recorded declines, with the largest (about 1.5 points) being registered in New Brunswick and British Columbia.

Summary

The past several decades have seen significant shifts in union membership. This is the result of changes in workforce demographics, labour laws, and economic structure, as well as recruitment success or failure. Among the notable shifts have been the increasing feminization of the movement, the growing prominence of public- and service-sector groups, and the waning influence of international unions.

In recent years, other significant trends have emerged. Unions have made little headway in the fast-growing information-technology industries or occupations. Rather, the movement has managed to maintain its overall density by offsetting losses in the goods sector with successes among employees in small workplaces and among part-time and non-permanent employees. The last two groups have large concentrations of youth and women who, not surprisingly, have also seen their unionization rates rise in recent years.

Notes

1 For example, in the United States, union membership declined steadily—from a high of 20.1% in 1983 to 12.9% in 2003.

2 The drop in union density between CALURA (pre-1996) and the LFS (post-1996) is probably mostly due to differences in survey design and coverage (see *Data sources* for details).

3 The public sector comprises government, Crown corporations, and publicly funded schools and hospitals.

4 Unionization in the public sector in the United States pales in comparison with Canada. In 2003, the U.S. rate (37.2%) was just over half of Canada's (72.0%). While public-sector rates have remained virtually intact in both countries over the past couple of decades, the U.S. private-sector rate has witnessed a precipitous fall, from roughly 16% in 1983 to 8.2% in 2003, compared with a moderate fall in Canada (from 25.9% in 1984 to 18.2% in 2003). The result was a much steeper decline in the overall unionization rate in the U.S., from 20.1% in 1983 to only 12.9% in 2003, while the Canadian rate remained in the 30% to 34% range.

5 In reality, the government unions (composed of federal or provincial government employees) are national unions since they are headquartered in Canada.

6 To a large extent, HRDC collapsed CALURA's national and government unions into one, labelled simply as 'national unions.'

7 The density is the product of the interaction between the change in union membership (the numerator for a given worker group) and the change in employees (the denominator for the same group).

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